

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An apparatus and method for thrusting plasma, utilizing a Hall thruster with segmented electrodes along the channel, which make the acceleration region as localized as possible. ~~Also disclosed~~ are methods of arranging the electrodes so as to minimize erosion and arcing. ~~Also disclosed~~ are methods of arranging the electrodes so as to produce a substantial reduction in plume divergence. The use of electrodes made of emissive material will reduce the radial potential drop within the channel, further decreasing the plume divergence. ~~Also disclosed~~ is a method of arranging and powering these electrodes so as to provide variable mode operation.

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